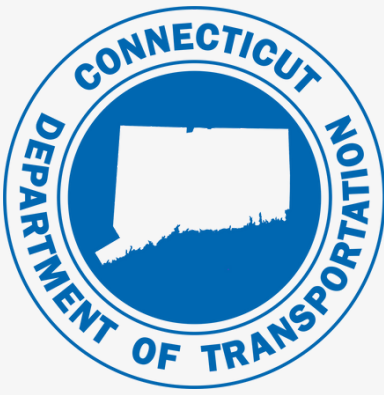


NOVEMBER 2022



ADDRESSING EQUITY THROUGH PROCESS AND OUTCOME



HOW THE GREATER HARTFORD MOBILITY STUDY IS
CONNECTING WITH CONNECTICUT COMMUNITIES IN
A NEW AND INCLUSIVE WAY

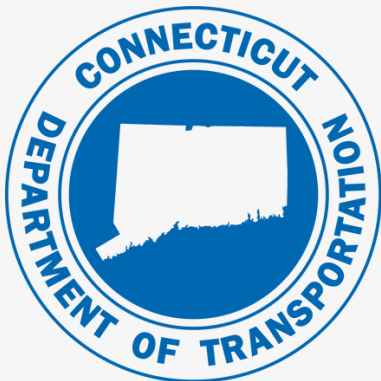
PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONTACT: KAFI ROUSE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
(860) 597-8067, KAFI.ROUSE@CT.GOV

ABOUT CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

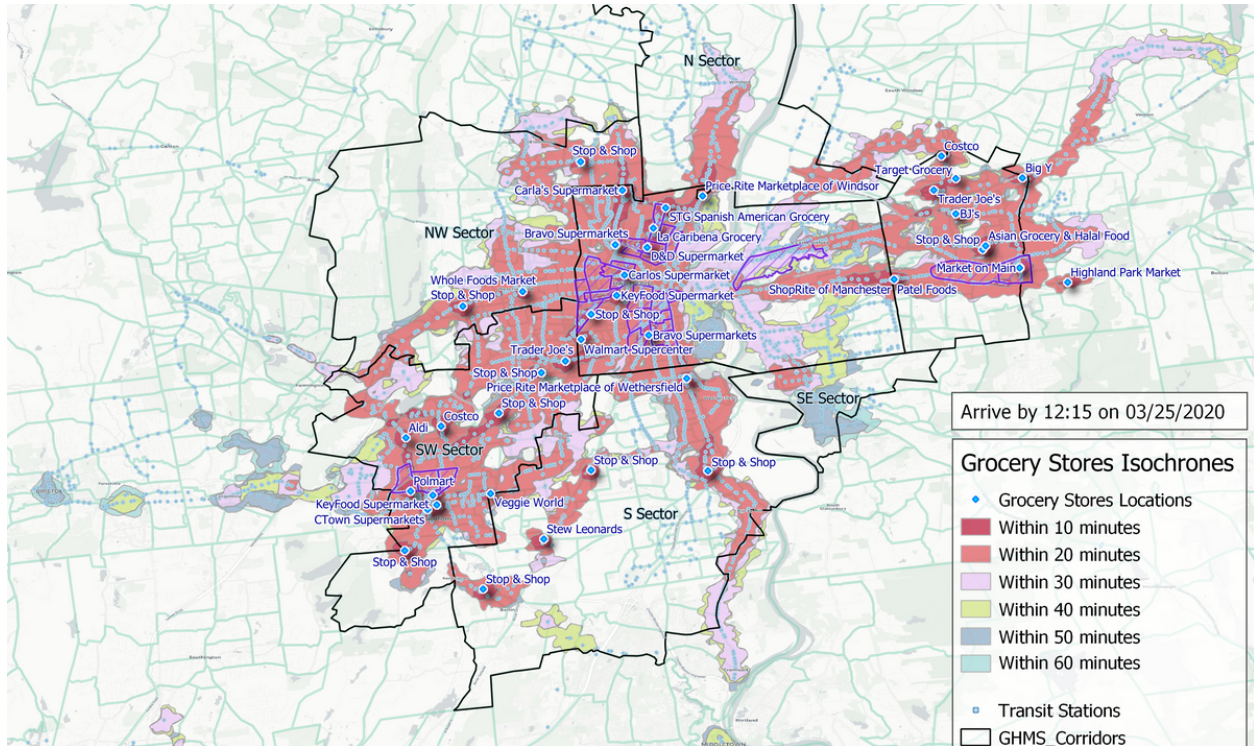


ABOUT CTDOT



The mission of the Connecticut Department of Transportation is to provide a safe and efficient intermodal transportation network that improves the quality of life and promotes economic vitality for the State and the region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



(3) ISOCHROME MAP PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO TRANSIT ACCESS TO HARTFORD-AREA FULL-SERVICE GROCERY STORES (PHOTO COURTESY OF CTDOT)

The Greater Hartford Mobility Study (GHMS) is an honest and powerful attempt by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to ensure that current and future residents experience a more equitable and efficient transportation system that meets their needs regardless of mode or ability.

The GHMS arose by recognizing that traditional methods of using independent efforts to investigate discrete transportation projects and associated land use development still need to fully capture the web of interconnectedness between transportation systems and ongoing project development interests.

The GHMS considers Highway, Transit, Rail, Bike, and Pedestrian transportation systems coupled with Land Use through a planning and environmental linkages (PEL) framework to achieve more equitable results across short-, medium-, and long-term horizons.

It recognizes that Connecticut's built environments function as large interconnected systems and should be holistically planned to consider the needs of different modes, scales, and the people that use them.

The GHMS facilitates the simultaneous consideration of all modes across the broader Hartford region and reimagines creative ways to solve identified transportation problems.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Although CTDOT began the Greater Hartford Mobility Study in 2019 using State funding, the formula and discretionary components of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will be critical in successfully implementing the projects identified by the GHMS.

Like many metropolitan regions, greater Hartford was negatively affected by transportation infrastructure constructed in the twentieth century. Those facilities have reached the end of their useful lives, and GHMS offers an opportunity to provide new, resilient infrastructure that reconnects Hartford's communities and heals decades of harm.

Building trust with the public is difficult when past transportation planning and mobility projects have failed to respond to the needs of their constituents or come to fruition.

These effects are disproportionately felt by people of color, people with low incomes, and other disenfranchised communities that have historically been excluded in the decision-making process. This deliberate exclusion has discouraged and created skepticism among many community members about the efficacy of engaging.

T

The GHMS Team carefully explored this historical practice and its impact and is working to remedy past mistakes by including previously omitted communities throughout the planning process, ensuring diverse voices are heard, and, perhaps most importantly, demonstrating inclusion and responsiveness to feedback received.

CTDOT uses virtual and in-person methods, including the creation of a Collaboration Portal, ongoing meetings with Neighborhood Revitalization Groups (NRGs), and collaboration with grassroots organizations and partners.

This includes the Voices of Women of Color, a social justice firm located in Hartford, that was hired to conduct neighborhood-level outreach in the Hartford's historically disenfranchised north end through hosting house parties.

Public engagement has been led by Hartford-based FHI Studio, a state certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise /Women Business Enterprise (DBE/WBE) firm. They have initiated progressive tactics, including implementing a multilingual social media strategy and strategic placement with the press and media, such as podcasts, morning shows, and interviews with stakeholders.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



SOCIAL JUSTICE FIRM, VOICES OF WOMEN OF COLOR LEADS A HOUSE PARTY IN THE NORTH-END NEIGHBORHOOD OF HARTFORD, CT (PHOTO COURTESY OF VOICES OF WOMEN OF COLOR)

The Universe of Alternatives and the ongoing work of the study are a direct result of conversations and feedback we have received and continue to receive in this process. Throughout the process, the GHMS Team has engaged with stakeholders and the community and tracked these efforts monthly. Stakeholders have been continually surveyed to assess ideas and sentiments.

This outreach has resulted in substantial participation by the community, with members of the public making almost 1,000 comments in the online portal by May 2022, up from about 200 less than one year prior. Additionally, GHMS has utilized Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to inform the community

in English and Spanish about project updates in frequent posts (sometimes more than once a day).

The GHMS is an outcome-based study working to deliver straightforward solutions and early wins as soon as possible (in some cases, before project completion). The framework of looking across modes and a solid commitment to being responsive to community needs has led to analyzing non-traditional mobility issues and recommending innovative solutions.

This component is critical for demonstrating the value of the study to the communities and working to renew faith in the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An internal working group looked across modes and priorities highlighted in community engagement.

This working group has developed early-action projects that are immediately implementable or implementable in the short-term, which include 17 bike and pedestrian alternatives, eight traffic alternatives, seven rail alternatives, four bus alternatives, and the submission of a multi-million-dollar grant application.

All options identified as early actions support immediate improvements to the user experience, enhanced safety and connectivity, and align with longer-term goals.

Additionally, such alternatives can be implemented with little planning, environmental review, or engineering work while serving as a foundation for larger projects that CTDOT can develop in the future.

One of these early actions is discussed below:

Food Access

Access to healthy foods is a strong predictor of long-term well-being. Community input from the GHMS process provided valuable insight that it was difficult for north-end neighborhoods in Hartford to access full-service grocery stores.

This lack of access necessitated reliance on convenience stores, bodegas, and fast food.

In response to this need, the GHMS Transit Team worked to complete an isochrone analysis[1] which looks at transit travel times from the surrounding area to grocery stores. Superficially, the data showed moderate accessibility, but this single data point does not consider some difficulties of shopping for food via transit (such as limits on the number of bags one can comfortably carry, and public safety concerns).

A preferred solution to a food swamp is a grocery store in the neighborhood. While CTDOT cannot build a grocery store, GHMS presented two alternative ideas that would link individuals and grocery stores: a near-term collaboration with CTrides to connect individuals lacking vehicles to those with vehicles; and a long-term micro-mobility effort using autonomous shuttles.

On the first point, while CTrides already facilitates single-occurrence trips, GHMS will work with CTrides to help promote and improve the usability of this feature. Because the scale of the overall GHMS vision will be significant, the State will not be able to execute the desired range of improvements without the IIJA funding. CTDOT has submitted an application for a Reconnecting Communities grant, which was established by IIJA, for GHMS implementation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



**GHMS TEAM ENGAGES WITH THE
COMMUNITY AT A HARTFORD YARD
GOATS BASEBALL GAME (PHOTO
COURTESY OF CTDOT)**

Furthermore, CTDOT is assessing potential future discretionary funding applications under IIJA. GHMS has also identified early action projects that can benefit from the year-on-year formula funding increases. This thinking extends to the ongoing engagement with the public and stakeholders.

The GHMS is working to remedy past transportation planning and community development mistakes by casting the widest possible net in soliciting ideas and feedback from communities within the study area, which is accomplished by using diverse and inclusive outreach platforms and working to close the loop on community concerns.

Under the GHMS, the public is a true collaborator in the developed alternatives and those that will be considered for implementation. In the final Phase of the study, CTDOT will be working to bundle the options developed throughout the process so that the region's cities, towns, and CTDOT have the tools and the agency to cultivate the vision that is the Greater Hartford Mobility Study.

[1] Isochrone analysis and mapping produces theoretical travel times from a specific node or nodes using a specific travel mode. In this example using full-service grocery stores as nodes and the existing transit network (routes, stops, and frequencies) to determine areas within specific travel time zones (e.g., 10, 20, or 30 minutes).